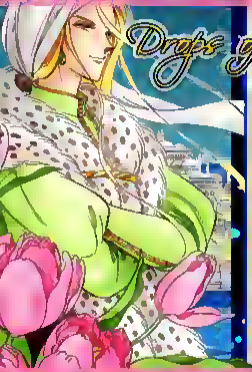
A FRIENDSHIP SCANS SCANLATION



Drops of Dreams, The Golden Birdcage

CHAPTER 25

Credits:

Provider: Miausu chan
Translator: RuskRain/Kasanekay
Proofreader: Astra
Cleaner: Kaizami
Typesetter: Rolaryuko
Quality checker: Unnatiecakewhat

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FCα FLOWER COMICS α
Petit Comic フラワーコミックスアルファ

7

夢の雫、黄金の鳥籠

篠原千絵
Chie Shinohara Presents

夢の雫、黄金の鳥籠 7

＊プチコミック
フラワーコミックスα＊

篠原千絵

Chie Shinohara Presents

CHARACTERS

▼スレイマン▼
オスマントルコ帝国
第10代皇帝(スルタン)。
領土拡大の野心を持つ。

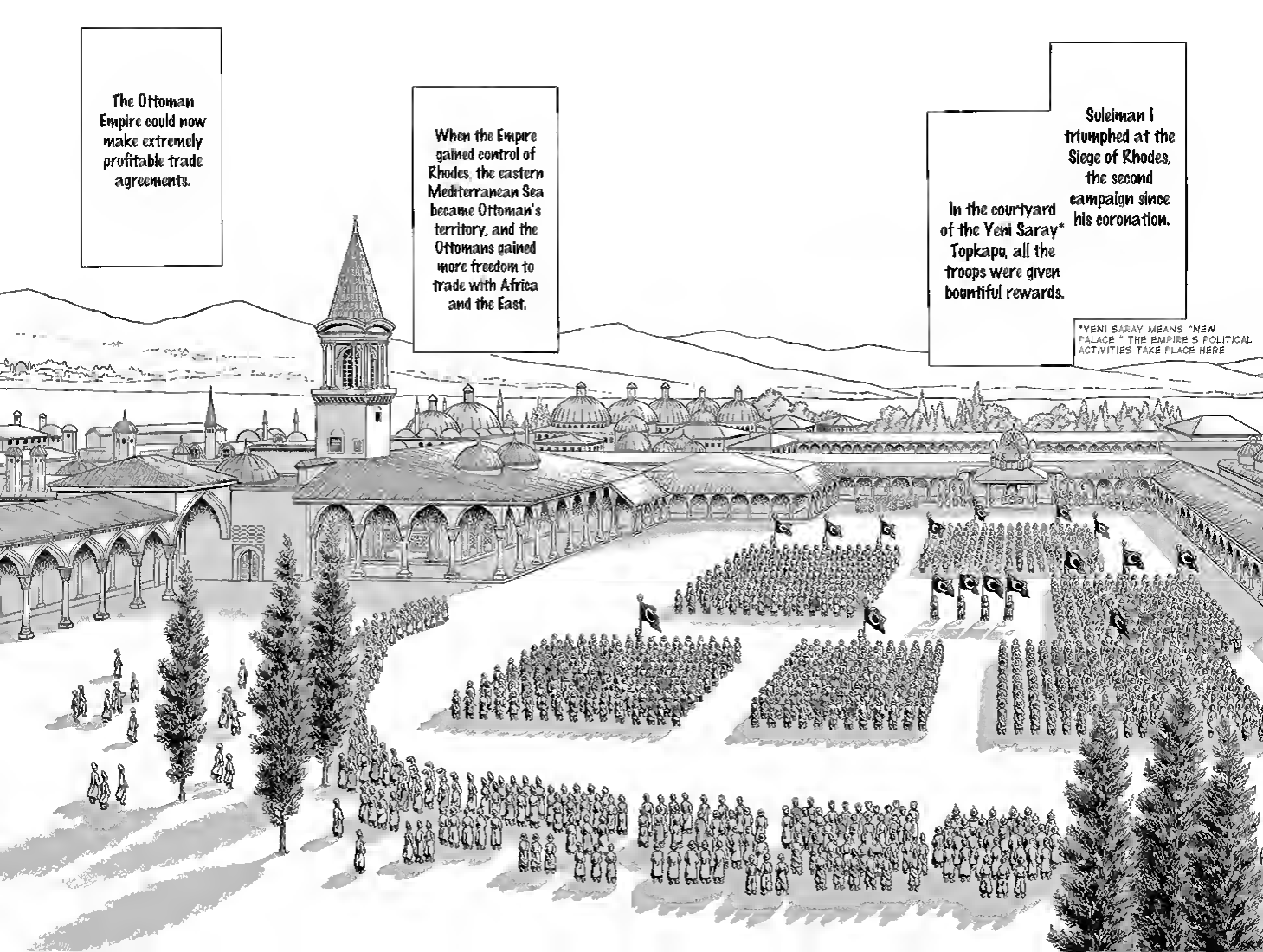
▲ヒュッレム▲
奴隷として売られるところを
イブラヒムに見いだされ
スレイマンの後宮に入る。

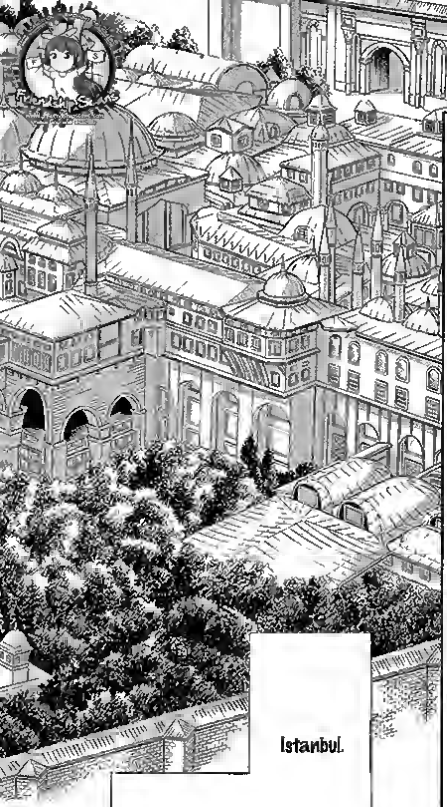
▼イブラヒム▼
スレイマンの側近で小姓頭(パシャ)。
マテウスという名の
ギリシャ商人の顔も持つ。

▲アルヴィーゼ・
グリッティ▲
ヴェネチアの商人。
イブラヒムの協力者。

▲ギュルバハル(ベラム カドゥン)▲
スレイマンの第一夫人。
第一皇子・
ムスタファの母。

▲ハディージェ(いもうと)▲
スレイマンの妹。
アルヴィーゼと
相思相愛。


The Ottoman Empire could now make extremely profitable trade agreements.
When the Empire gained control of Rhodes, the eastern Mediterranean Sea became Ottoman's territory, and the Ottomans gained more freedom to trade with Africa and the East.
In the courtyard of the Yeni Saray* Topkapu, all the troops were given bountiful rewards.
Suleiman I triumphed at the Siege of Rhodes, the second campaign since his coronation.
*YENI SARAY MEANS "NEW PALACE." THE EMPIRE'S POLITICAL ACTIVITIES TAKE PLACE HERE



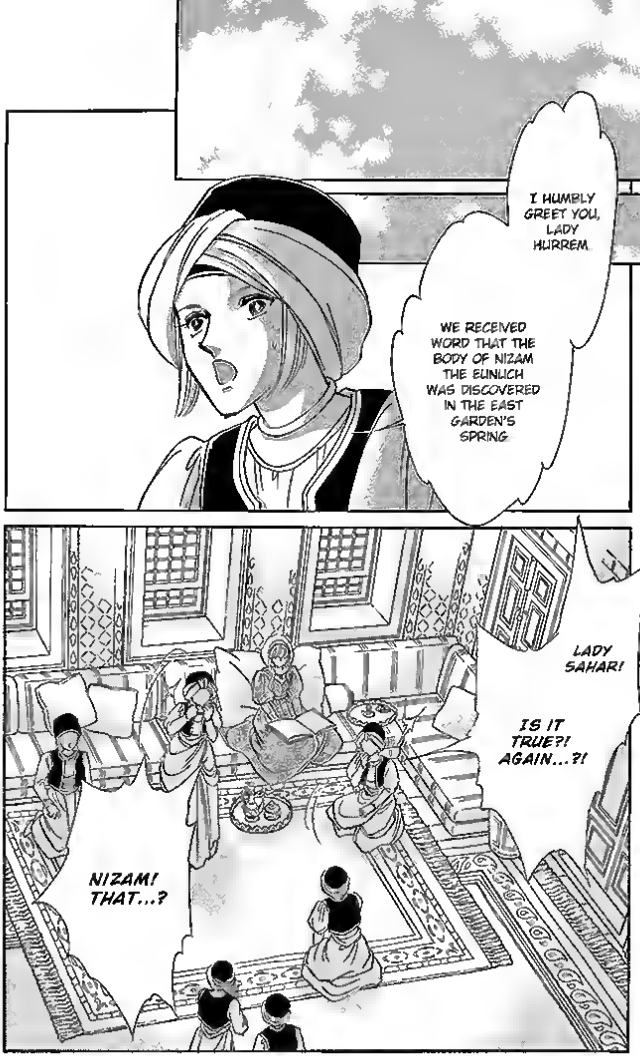
However,

we begin four months prior, to when Suleiman was still in the middle of a violent siege on an island in the Aegean Sea.

HEY DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THE ROYAL HEIR THAT LADY HURREM IS EXPECTING?
WILL IT BE AN IMPERIAL PRINCE? OR AN IMPERIAL PRINCESS?
THAT'S RIGHT. I WONDER WHICH IT COULD BE... HIS MAJESTY, THE SULTAN'S SECOND ROYAL HEIR
THERE WILL PROBABLY BE A CELEBRATION IN THE HAREM.
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!
ACTUALLY, I DON'T THINK WE'VE HAD A CELEBRATION IN QUITE SOME TIME
AH!
LADY GULBAHAR WILL DEFINITELY...
WHA...
WHAT IS THAT...?!

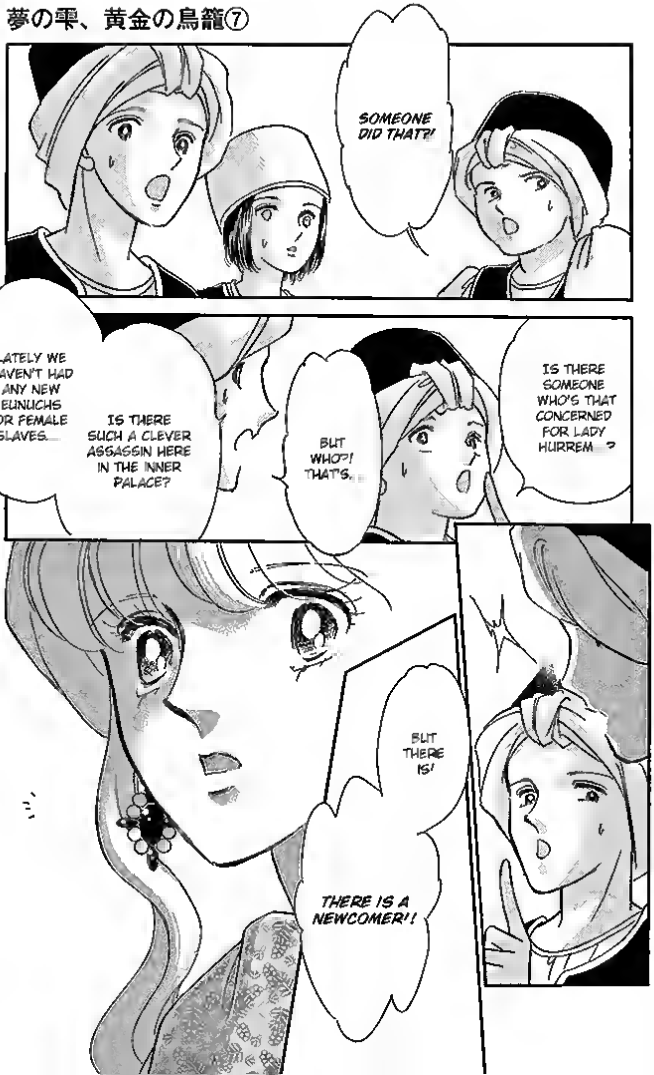
drifts
AAAA
AAH!

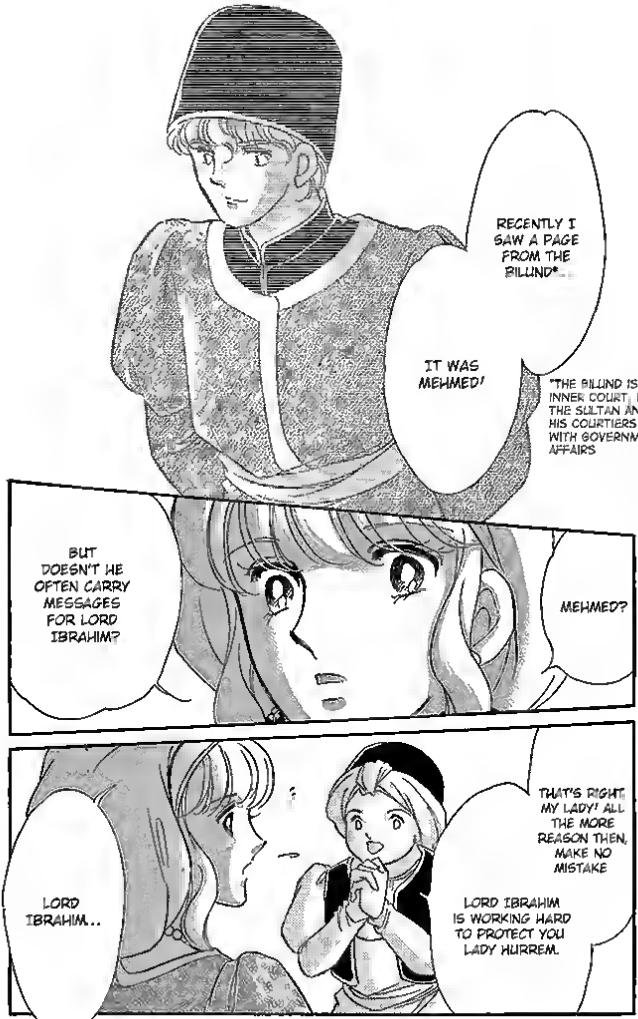
WHO... WHO
..IS IT THIS TIME?
ISN'T THAT NIZAM?
LADY GULBAHAR'S EUNUCH!
HOW MANY DOES THIS MAKE?!
LADY GULBAHAR'S AIDES AND SUPPORTERS ARE BEING KILLED?


I HUMBLY GREET YOU, LADY HURREM.
WE RECEIVED WORD THAT THE BODY OF NIZAM THE EUNUCH WAS DISCOVERED IN THE EAST GARDEN'S SPRING
LADY SAHAR!
IS IT TRUE?! AGAIN...?!
NIZAM! THAT...?

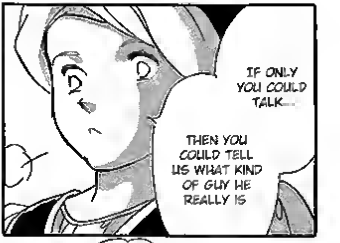
NIZAM!
IS THAT NOT THE EUNUCH WHO WAS SAID TO BE LADY GULBAHAR'S RIGHT-HAND WOMAN?
YES!
YES...
.....
LADY NASHAT WHO SUPPORTED ME WAS KILLED BY NIZAM, WHO IS NOW DEAD
THE OTHER DAY, A EUNUCH WHO WAS TRYING TO ASSASSINATE ME WAS KILLED BY SOMEONE IN AN INSTANT

IT LOOKS LIKE IT, AFTER ALL...
SOMEONE IS...
I WONDER IF THERE'S SOMEONE LIKE THAT...
SELECTING PEOPLE WHO WOULD DO ME HARM AND KILLING THEM...
YES, LADY HURREM
THAT'S WHAT I THINK AS WELL


SOMEONE DID THAT?!
IS THERE SOMEONE WHO'S THAT CONCERNED FOR LADY HURREM...?
BUT WHO?! THAT'S...
IS THERE SUCH A CLEVER ASSASSIN HERE IN THE INNER PALACE?
LATELY WE HAVEN'T HAD ANY NEW EUNUCHS OR FEMALE SLAVES...
BUT THERE IS!
THERE IS A NEWCOMER!!

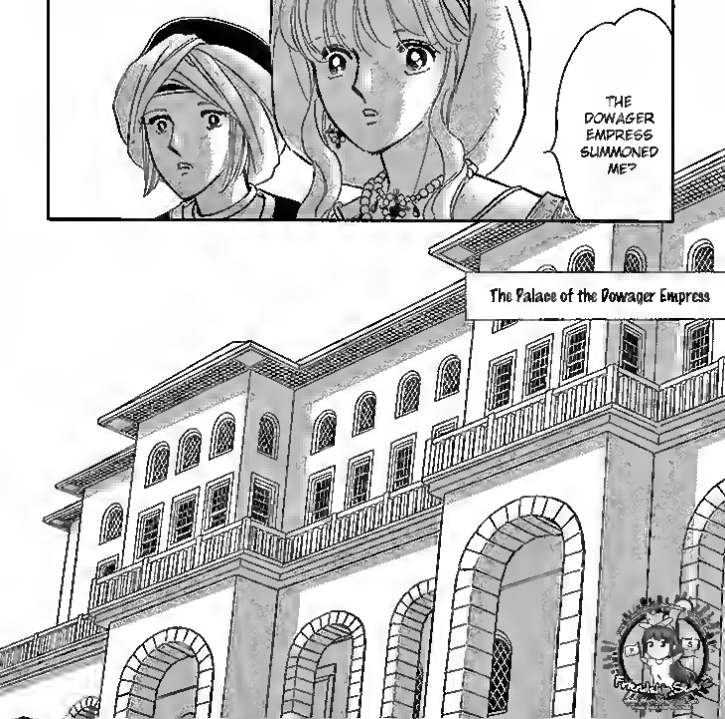

RECENTLY I SAW A PAGE FROM THE BILLIND*...
IT WAS MEHMED!
*THE BILLIND IS THE INNER COURT, WHERE THE SULTAN AND HIS COURTIERS DEAL WITH GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
MEHMED?
BUT DOESN'T HE OFTEN CARRY MESSAGES FOR LORD IBRAHIM?
THAT'S RIGHT, MY LADY! ALL THE MORE REASON THEN, MAKE NO MISTAKE
LORD IBRAHIM IS WORKING HARD TO PROTECT YOU LADY HURREM.
LORD IBRAHIM...

Lord Ibrahim is protecting me...?!



I HAVE COME TO GATHER YOU, LADY HURREM
THE DOWAGER EMPRESS, LADY HAFSA HATOON, HAS SUMMONED YOU.

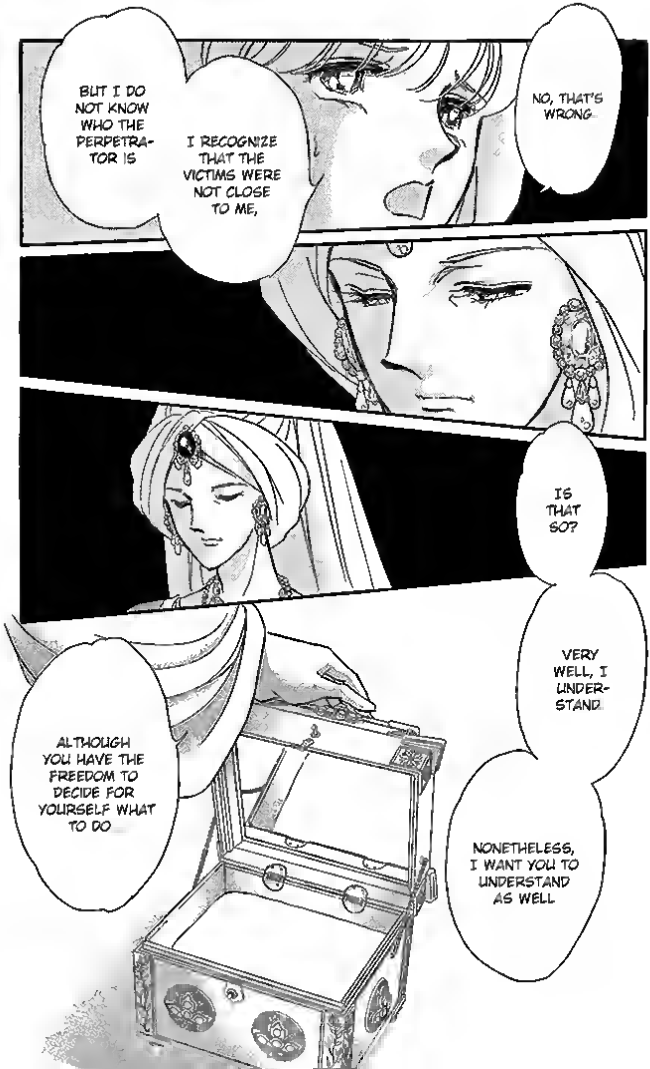
THE DOWAGER EMPRESS SUMMONED ME?


The Palace of the Dowager Empress

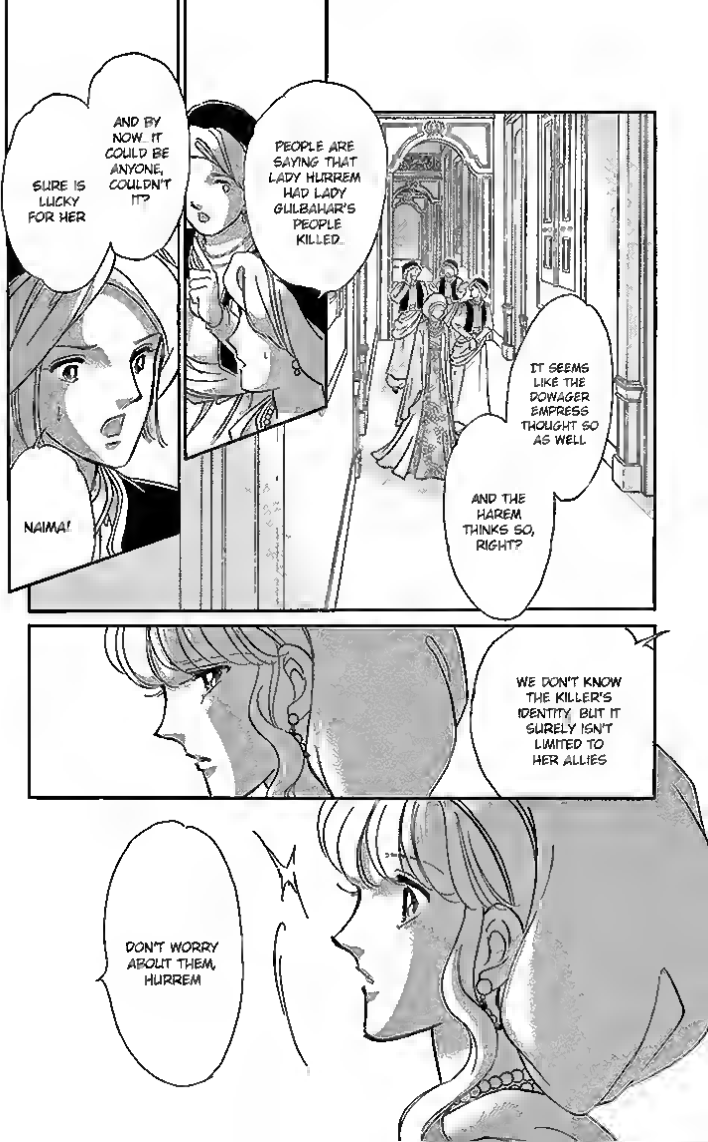
SO YOU'VE COME, HURREM.
IS THE BABY IN GOOD HEALTH?

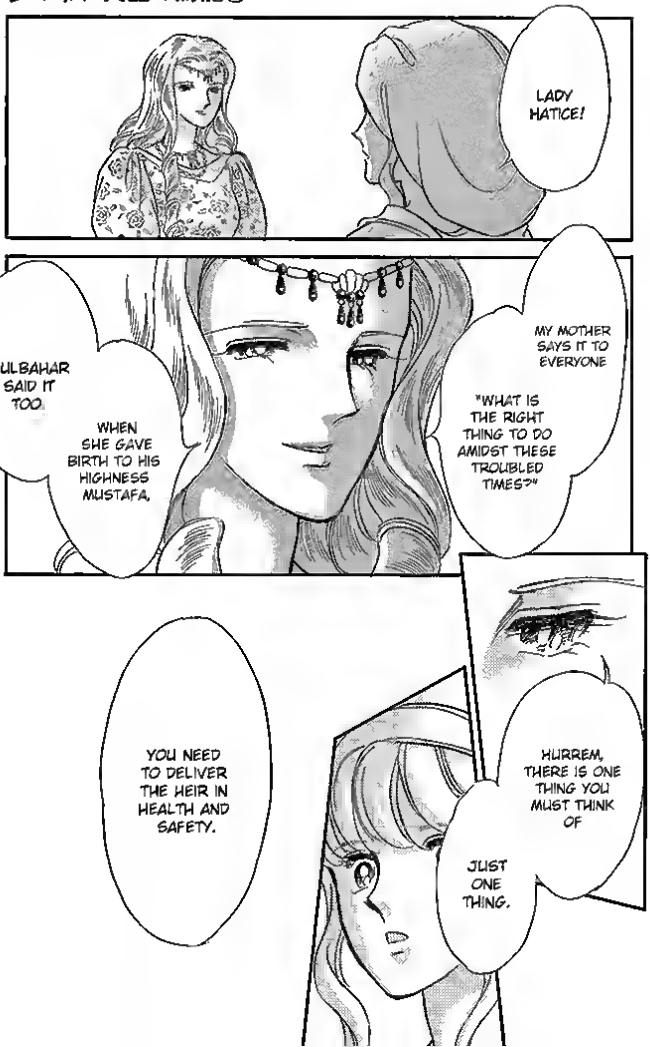
MY DEEPEST GRATITUDE.
THANKS TO YOUR KINDNESS, THE CHILD IS HEALTHY.
I AM GLAD TO HEAR IT.
NOW, TO MORE COMMON-PLACE MATTERS.
THERE IS ONE MATTER OF THE HAREM WHICH HAS COME TO MY ATTENTION.
SO THERE IS ONE THING I WISH TO SAY TO YOU.

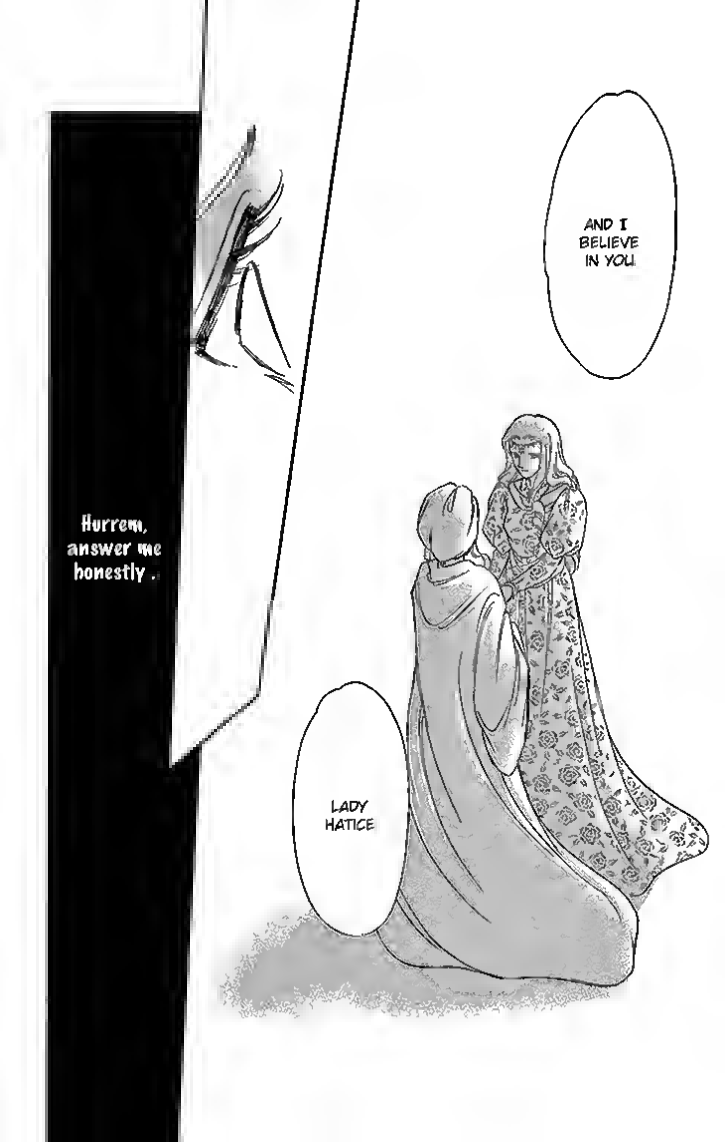
THERE IS A TRAGIC STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THIS PLACE. PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED ONE AFTER ANOTHER.
THE HAREM IS IN A TERRIBLE COMMOTION
PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ME GET INVOLVED.
I DO NOT WISH TO INVOLVE MYSELF IN HAREM POLITICS, SO...
YOU'RE THINKING 'THE DOWAGER EMPRESS HAS GIVEN ME AN ORDER,' ARE YOU NOT?
IS IT NOT SO?
I HAVE HEARD THAT ALL THE PEOPLE WHO DIED WERE YOUR ENEMIES.


NO, THAT'S WRONG.
I RECOGNIZE THAT THE VICTIMS WERE NOT CLOSE TO ME,
BUT I DO NOT KNOW WHO THE PERPETRATOR IS
IS THAT SO?
VERY WELL, I UNDERSTAND.
NONETHELESS, I WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND AS WELL
ALTHOUGH YOU HAVE THE FREEDOM TO DECIDE FOR YOURSELF WHAT TO DO

I DO NOT LIKE STRIFE
ALRIGHT?
PLEASE TRY NOT TO CAUSE THE HAREM ANY MORE TROUBLE.
Thud
...UNDER-STOOD.


AND BY NOW, IT COULD BE ANYONE, COULDN'T IT?
SURE IS LUCKY FOR HER
NAIMA!
PEOPLE ARE SAYING THAT LADY HURREM HAD LADY GULBAHAR'S PEOPLE KILLED.
IT SEEMS LIKE THE DOWAGER EMPRESS THOUGHT SO AS WELL
AND THE HAREM THINKS SO, RIGHT?
WE DON'T KNOW THE KILLER'S IDENTITY, BUT IT SURELY ISN'T LIMITED TO HER ALLIES
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM, HURREM


LADY HATICE!
MY MOTHER SAYS IT TO EVERYONE
"WHAT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO AMIDST THESE TROUBLED TIMES?"
GULBAHAR SAID IT TOO.
WHEN SHE GAVE BIRTH TO HIS HIGHNESS MUSTAFA.
HURREM, THERE IS ONE THING YOU MUST THINK OF
JUST ONE THING.
YOU NEED TO DELIVER THE HEIR IN HEALTH AND SAFETY.


Hurrem, answer me honestly .
AND I BELIEVE IN YOU.
LADY HATICE

Does that child really belong to my elder brother?

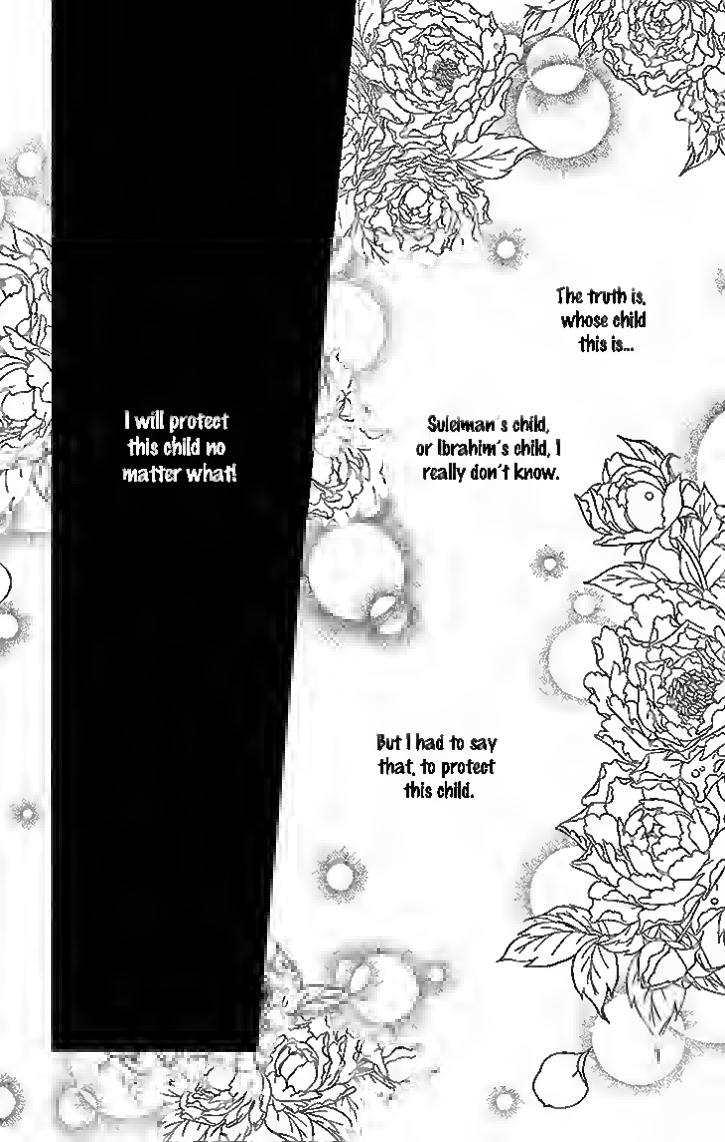
I BELIEVE YOU.

THEREFORE, DON'T LET ANYONE DEFEAT YOU, AND PLEASE GIVE US A HEALTHY HEIR.

The child of Suleiman.

Of course this child is...

Forgive me, Lady Hatice.
HURREM!
I LOVE YOU!
MY FIRST FRIEND FROM THE HAREM!


I will protect this child no matter what!
The truth is, whose child this is...
Suleiman's child, or Ibrahim's child, I really don't know.
But I had to say that, to protect this child.

LADY HURREM,
ARE YOU IN GOOD HEALTH?
I'VE ACQUIRED SOME RIPENED FRUIT, SO I THOUGHT I'D COME BY TO OFFER IT TO YOU.
MEHMED!

Lord Ibrahim...
AREN'T YOU THAT PAGE FROM THE BILLIND?
ARE YOU SURE YOU OUGHT TO BE COMING TO THE HAREM LIKE THIS?
I COME FROM THE HAS ODABASHI, LORD IBRAHIM,
WHO BADE ME COME TO LADY HURREM AND MAKE MYSELF USEFUL TO HER
AH, SHAFIK
CUT THESE UP, WON'T YOU?
...!!
MEHMED...
DID LORD IBRAHIM REALLY DO THAT FOR ME?
WHY YES, OF COURSE!
LADY HURREM, WHATEVER YOU MAY DESIRE,
OR IF THERE'S ANYTHING THAT MAKES YOU UNHAPPY,
PLEASE CONSIDER ME IN YOUR SERVICE!

MEHMED AND SHAFIK, I WAS TOLD...
...THAT THE TWO OF YOU GREW UP ALONGSIDE LORD IBRAHIM.
WHY HAVE YOU STAYED BY HIS SIDE?
LADY HURREM, ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH DEVSHIRME?

I LEARNED OF IT FROM MY TUTOR, BUT...
DEVSHIRME?
DEVSHIRME IS...
THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE'S PRACTICE OF DRAFTING
YOUTHS ARE DRAFTED FROM NON-ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE EMPIRE

THIS HAPPENS EVERY FEW YEARS
THE NUMBER DIFFERS DEPENDING ON HOW BIG THE VILLAGE IS, BUT THEY SELECT CHILDREN UNDER TEN YEARS OLD,
WHO EXCEL IN INTELLECT, APPEARANCE, AND PHYSIQUE
THE CHOSEN ONES ARE GIVEN RED CLOTHING TO WEAR, AND ONCE GATHERED, ARE TAKEN FROM THEIR HOME VILLAGES TO THE CAPITAL.

FIRST, THEY ARE CONVERTED TO ISLAM
THEN, IN THE PALACES OF THE NEW AND THE OLD CAPITALS, THEY RECEIVE EDUCATION IN LANGUAGE, LAW, AND MUCH ELSE
AFTER THAT, THOSE WITH THE APTITUDE CAN BE DEPLOYED IN HIGH POSITIONS...
IN THE BILUND OR THE IMPERIAL GUARD
TAKEN FROM THEIR HOME VILLAGES...
YOU WERE BROUGHT AGAINST YOUR WILL?

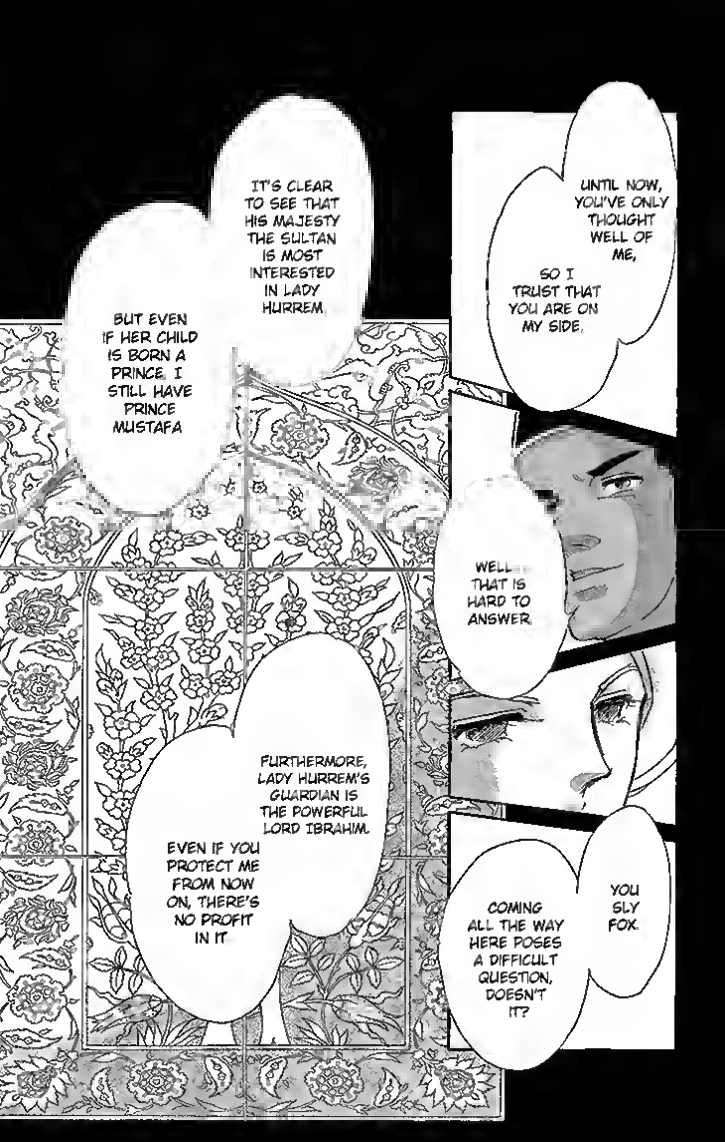
BECAUSE EVEN IF YOU STUDY HARD, ELDEST AND ONLY SONS WILL BE SET APART
IT'S PROBABLY LIKE THAT FOR MANY VILLAGES BUT MY EXPERIENCE WAS DIFFERENT
WHEN I CAME TO THE CAPITAL AND HEARD THAT YOU COULD SUCCEED IN LIFE BY USING YOUR OWN ABILITIES, I WAS HAPPY I'D BEEN DRAFTED
LORD IBRAHIM TOOK NOTICE OF US, AND MADE SURE WE RECEIVED A THOROUGH EDUCATION
DIDN'T HE!
SHAFIK AND I WERE BOTH TAKEN FROM VILLAGES IN EUROPE
BUT WE'RE HAPPY WITH OUR LIVES IN THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL
SO PLEASE, DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.
IN ACCORDANCE WITH LORD IBRAHIM'S INSTRUCTIONS, I WILL ALWAYS DO MY BEST TO SERVE YOU, LADY HURREM.
MEHMED

WE WILL ABSOLUTELY DEVOTE OUR WHOLE LIVES TO SERVING YOU.
FOR YOU, LADY HURREM, AND THE HEIR YOU CARRY,

MEHMED...

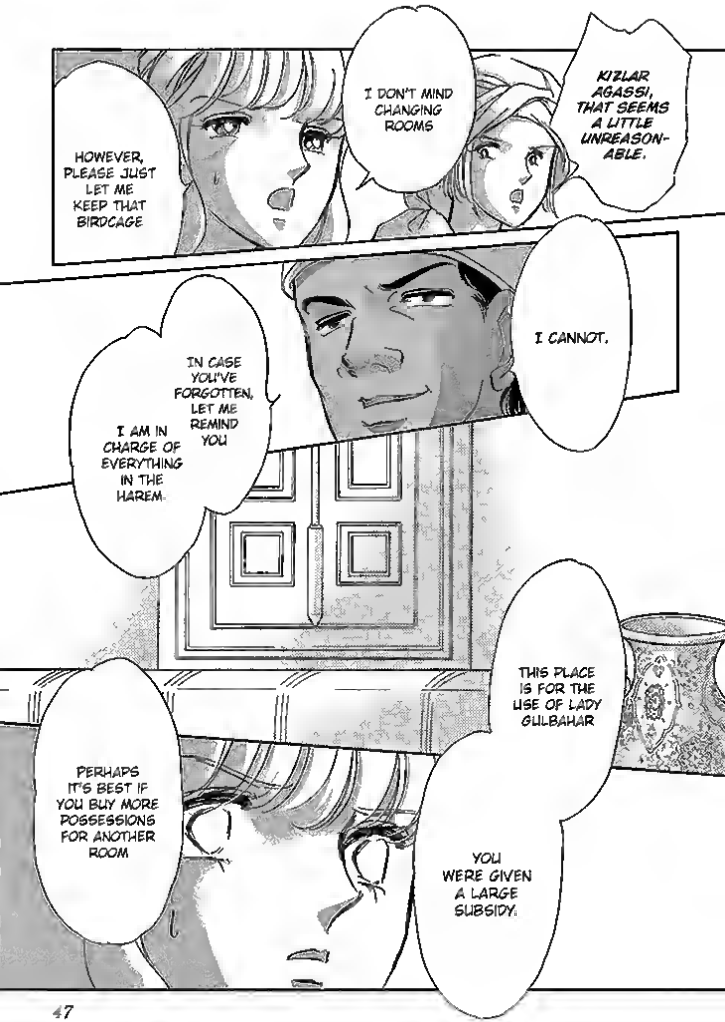
IN THIS MIDNIGHT HOUR, WITH AN AIR OF SECRECY,
WHEN SOMEONE CALLS TO ME,
WILL IT BE THE SECRET WORDS I WISH TO EXCHANGE?

LADY GULBAHAR.
AS SLY AS EVER, I SEE.
YOU UNDERSTAND QUITE WELL, DON'T YOU?
I HOPE YOU'LL EVENTUALLY MAKE IT CLEAR WHETHER YOU SERVE ME OR LADY HURREM.
KIZLAR AGASSI* SAHID
*THE KIZLAR AGASSI IS THE CHIEF EUNUCH


IT'S CLEAR TO SEE THAT HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN IS MOST INTERESTED IN LADY HURREM.
BUT EVEN IF HER CHILD IS BORN A PRINCE, I STILL HAVE PRINCE MUSTAFA
UNTIL NOW, YOU'VE ONLY THOUGHT WELL OF ME,
SO I TRUST THAT YOU ARE ON MY SIDE.
WELL... THAT IS HARD TO ANSWER.
FURTHERMORE, LADY HURREM'S GUARDIAN IS THE POWERFUL LORD IBRAHIM.
EVEN IF YOU PROTECT ME FROM NOW ON, THERE'S NO PROFIT IN IT.
YOU SLY FOX.
COMING ALL THE WAY HERE POSES A DIFFICULT QUESTION, DOESN'T IT?

EVER SINCE YOU CAME TO THE HAREM FROM MANISA,
YOU HAVE ACTED MOST INTELLIGENTLY OF THE CONCUBINES
WILL RISK MY LIFE AS KIZLAR AGASSI TO PROTECT THE BAS KADIN. I SWEAR IT.
THEN I, SAHID,

HONORED KIZLAR AGASSI?!
IS THERE SOME MATTER CONCERNING ME?
!!
THIS ROOM AND ALL ITS FURNISHINGS,
ARE TO BE HANDED OVER TO LADY GULBAHAR.
THE BAS KADIN FINDS IT SUITABLE FOR HER USE.
THIS ROOM IS BEST FOR VIEWING THE CURRENT SEASON.


KIZLAR AGASSI, THAT SEEMS A LITTLE UNREASONABLE.
I DON'T MIND CHANGING ROOMS
HOWEVER, PLEASE JUST LET ME KEEP THAT BIRDCAGE
I CANNOT.
IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN, LET ME REMIND YOU
I AM IN CHARGE OF EVERYTHING IN THE HAREM.
THIS PLACE IS FOR THE USE OF LADY GULBAHAR
YOU WERE GIVEN A LARGE SUBSIDY.
PERHAPS IT'S BEST IF YOU BUY MORE POSSESSIONS FOR ANOTHER ROOM

HOW LONG WILL THE KIZLAR AGASSI SAY SUCH TERRIBLE THINGS?

HE SERVES LADY GUL-BAHAR, CORRECT?

THIS DEMON-STRATION IS FOR HER BENEFIT

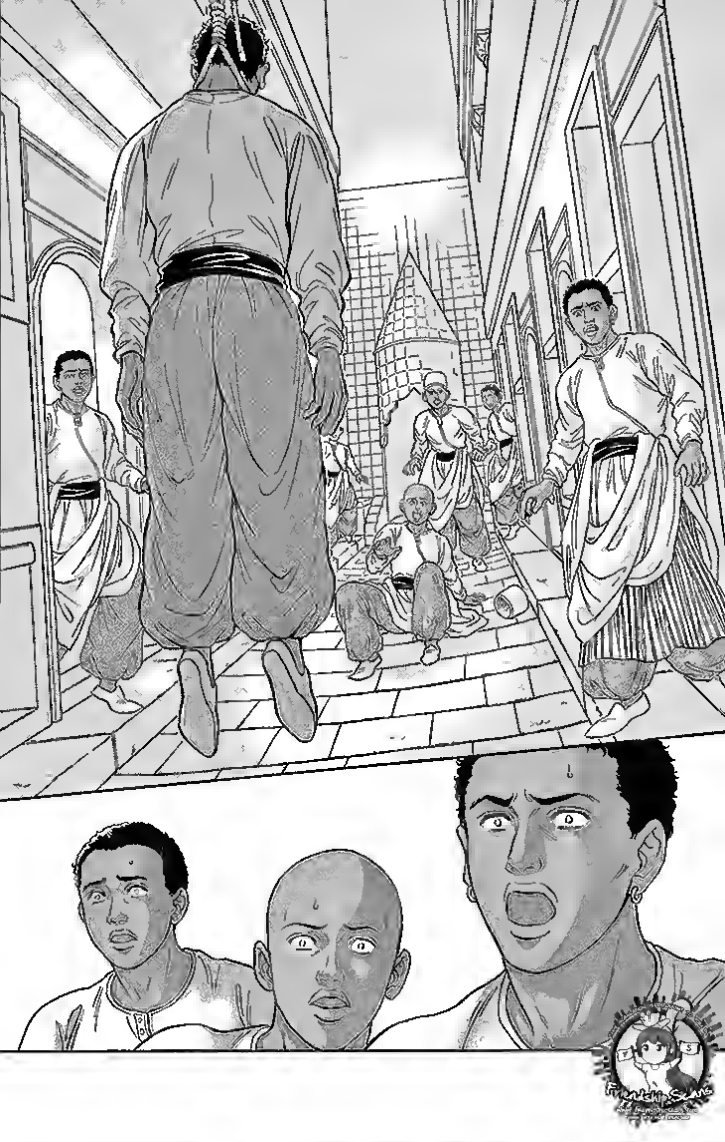
SHE HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN EXTRAVAGANT PERSON

It is the treasure that Lord Ibrahim gave me when I first came to the harem

SHE CAN MOVE ME FROM ROOM TO ROOM AS SHE PLEASES,

BUT THAT BIRDCAGE IS THE ONE THING I WILL NOT HAND OVER!!

WHA...
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?
I THINK I HEARD IT COMING FROM THE EUNUCHS' ROOM...
AAAAGH!



THE KIZLAR AGASSI?!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
THIS TIME, IT'S THE KIZLAR AGASSI?!

THE KIZLAR AGASSI WAS KILLED...
IS IT TRUE?
SURELY WE HAVE MANY ATTENDANT EUNUCHS?!
DID NONE OF THEM SEE IT HAPPEN?!

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